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ABSTRACT

A study, part of a 5-year investigation (1991-1995) of patterns of implementation of literature-based instruction in schools serving large numbers of children from low-income families, recounts children's literacy experiences as observed in a third-grade classroom in an urban school in upstate New York. The primary goal was to understand the various factors influencing literacy instruction in several such schools. During the course of the study, teachers participated on two levels: on the first level, brief teacher interviews and classroom observations were conducted to assess various factors concerning literacy instruction, such as type/quantity of books in the classroom library, planning for literature instruction, and evaluation of literary knowledge; on the second level, 4 of the 11 teachers volunteered to serve as teacher collaborators during all 5 years of the project. Collaborators were involved in extensive formal and informal interviews, focus group meetings, classroom observations, and collaborative teaching units with the researchers. Data were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively to describe the nature of literacy instruction the course of the study. Analysis tried to make sense of the representative third-grade teacher's instruction by exploring the constructs which underpinned her notions about teaching, learning, and work. Results fall into five categories: (1) focus on personal life, (2) perceptions of children, (3) curricular influences, (4) perspectives on change, and (5) school and district context factors. (Contains 12 tables, one figure, and 62 references. Attached are library worksheets, a classroom literacy inventory protocol, and a student observation instrument.) (NKA)

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CELA

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Abstract

This paper, part of a five-year investigation (1991-1995) of patterns of implementation of literature-based instruction in schools serving large numbers of children from low-income families, recounts children's literacy experiences as observed in Ms. Philips' third-grade classroom in an urban school in upstate New York. Our primary goal was to understand the various factors influencing literacy instruction in several such schools. During the course of the study, teachers participated on two levels. On the first level, we conducted brief teacher interviews and classroom observations to assess various factors concerning literacy instruction, such as type and quantity of books in the classroom library, planning for literature instruction, and evaluation of literary knowledge. On the second level, four of the eleven teachers, including Ms. Philips, volunteered to serve as teacher collaborators during all five years of the project. Collaborators were involved in extensive formal and informal interviews, focus group meetings, classroom observations, and collaborative teaching units with the researchers. These data were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively to describe the nature of literacy instruction over the course of the study. In the analysis that forms the basis of this report, we tried to make sense of Ms. Philips' instruction by exploring the constructs which underpinned her notions about teaching, learning and work. Our results fall into five categories: 1) a focus on personal life, 2) perceptions of children, 3) curricular influences, 4) perspectives on change, and 5) school and district context factors. We believe Ms. Philips may be unaware of some of the factors which influence her instruction.

Access Denied: A Five-Year Study of Literacy Instruction Provided to Poor, Urban Elementary Children

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Introduction

The research literature on teacher change and school reform in language arts is growing. Most of the work centers around changes teachers make in their instruction as they incorporate whole language methods or literature-based approaches to reading instruction (e.g., Routman, 1988). Longitudinal studies in this area generally explore teacher change over one or two years (Kidder, 1989; Pace, 1992; Scharer, 1992). This paper presents children's literacy experiences observed over a five-year period in an urban school. In this introduction, we present a summary of language arts instruction and a visit to the school library from a typical day in Ms. Phillip's classroom in this school. We assembled these events directly from our field notes so that we may give readers a picture of "a day in the life" of a typical child in this school.

Let us state up front that these are not the findings we wanted to discover, and these are certainly not the results we wanted to report. Our job as researchers and our ethical responsibilities as educators compel us, in the hope that others won't encounter such bleak educational circumstances in the future, to tell this story as we lived through it and observed it for five years. Our findings mirror those of Kozol who wrote,

> To the extent that school reforms such as "restructuring" are advocated for the inner cities, few of these reforms have reached the schools that I have seen. In each of the larger cities there is usually one school or one subdistrict which is highly publicized as an example of "restructured" education; but the changes rarely reach beyond this one example. Even in those schools where some "restructuring" has taken place, the fact of racial segregation has been, and continues to be, largely uncontested. In many cities, what is termed "restructuring" struck me as very little more than moving around the same old furniture within the house of poverty.... These urban schools were, by and large, extraordinarily unhappy places. With

few exceptions, they reminded me of "garrisons" or "outposts" in a foreign nation.... I often wondered why we would agree to let our children go to school in places where no politician, school board president, or business CEO would dream of working. Children seem to wrestle with these kinds of questions too. (1991, pp. 4-5).

While various reforms were taking place in this school and district, like Kozol we found this school to be a very unhappy place where restructuring seemed to be little more than shifting around what already existed.

Likewise, the stories our data tell are "unhappy," and we find it necessary to offer readers a different structure than that of the traditional research report. First, we offer readers a snapshop of a typical day of a child in this class so that they may reflect upon and draw their own conclusions. We also describe a typical visit to the school library. Next, we introduce readers to our research methodology. Finally, we present our conclusions coupled with the related research which informs our interpretation and reflections. Thus, we hope that this piece is as much a discussion piece as it is a presentation of research findings.

Tamara's Day

Today is a typical day in third grade at Washington Elementary, a large urban school serving many poor children. At 8:45 Tamara enters her classroom on the second floor. It is silent reading time. She takes a book from her desk and begins reading while other children talk and search for books. Ms. Philips talks with two parents at the classroom door. Tamara and her friend Joyce look at trade books at their seats then pause to talk and copy down information.

At 8:53 the assistant principal and Shenieka, a classmate, appear at the door and begin a short conversation with Ms. Philips. The noise level in the classroom rises as students comment on Shenieka's return from suspension, where she has spent the past two weeks. Simultaneously, several other students enter the room, having just arrived at school. Lots of teasing and bickering are traded among students as these late-comers organize themselves for the school day. Tamara stops reading and attends to what's going on in the classroom. She and others get back to reading as Ms. Philips enters the room and begins her own reading. The classroom is alive with conversation.

After the Pledge of Allegiance and lunch count (9:13), Ms. Philips reviews yesterday's lesson on the parts of speech, writes sentences on the board, and then directs students to copy the sentences and label the parts of speech. The children begin transcribing sentences and

completing the assignment in their journals. They work quickly and finish in a few minutes, just as Ms. Philips calls for their attention and leads them in a choral reading and review of the week's spelling words. Fifteen minutes later Ms. Philips assigns pages in the spelling packet and the children begin working. Tamara copies her spelling words, but stops every now and then to talk with Joyce. After five minutes, Ms. Philips goes over homework.

At 9:37 Tamara finally begins writing her spelling sentences. She stares into space, writes a little, talks to friends, writes a little, stretches, talks to herself, writes a little more. Just then, two male students begin shouting and pushing each other. Tamara watches Ms. Philips reprimand the boys. Five minutes later, she resumes her work after things have calmed down. The Title One teacher then appears at the door and takes her reading group just as another student arrives to begin the day.

It is now 9:50 and Tamara struggles to finish her sentences. She seems upset with her work and mumbles to herself, "I messed up." She takes out her journal and looks through it, appearing to be searching for something, but she soon resumes her writing and finishes with Joyce's help.

Ms. Philips quickly checks Tamara's work and sends her back to make corrections. Tamara has only one minute to make these corrections before Ms. Philips calls students to the rug to put them into partner reading groups to read today's story, "The Emperor's Plum Tree," from the literature anthology. Although Ms. Philips identifies her as one of the "high" students, Tamara struggles to read the text, finger points, and attempts to decode using initial sounds/letters. While Tamara is familiar with the story line and characters, she cannot independently read the text.

After reading the story, students must then sit quietly for three minutes until art time. They return at 11:25 and Ms. Philips leads them through a workbook page, one question at a time. Tamara refers to the story to find answers to the questions. Many students do more talking than working, but Tamara remains intently engaged in her work.

Sixteen minutes later, Ms. Philips directs students who are finished to come to the rug with their workbooks, and they spend several minutes correcting answers. Needing extra time to finish the assignment, Tamara and a few other students join this group late.

Following science, lunch, and independent work time, which last until 1:43, Ms. Philips reviews the chapter she read aloud yesterday in *A Wind in the Door* (L'Engle, 1973). She then begins reading aloud the next chapter and reads for three minutes before Title One math children return to the room. Ms. Philips resumes reading but must soon stop again to reprimand two students who are throwing sponges at each other. Tamara begins playing with an eraser and fidgets in her seat, as do most other students. Ms. Philips stops reading at 1:57 and reviews the chapter, emphasizing text clues that explain the ending.

Tamara spends the remaining 50 minutes of the day on a math lesson. (Field notes, 6/14/95)

A Trip to the School Library

Tamara's class visits the library once a week for one half hour. At 10:20 on a typical January morning, Ms. Philips has students get pencils and paper and line up for library. On their way down the hall, students are disruptive. By the time the class arrives at the library door, many are kicking and yelling at one another.

Library time usually consists of worksheets or videos (see appendix for examples). Today the librarian shows *Thumbelina*. Students push and shove as they find spaces on the floor for the movie. Two girls then get into a fight and roll around on the floor. Other students cheer them on. The librarian attempts to separate the fighting girls, restores order minutes later, and turns on the movie.

Student talk overwhelms the beginning of the movie. After a couple of minutes, most students stop talking. A couple of students spend this time drawing. Most laugh when the barnyard animals begin singing, and they mock Thumbelina's happy song about finding the prince. When the movie ends, students line up and leave the library without having time to select and check out books. (Field notes, 1/23/95)

We present the snapshot of Tamara's day and her visit to the library to illustrate instruction in this classroom. Tamara's day is wrought with disruptions and attempts to complete assignments. Had we profiled a less persistent child, the story could have been quite different. One question needing to be addressed is the effect of behavioral and procedural disruptions on children's learning. Many educators including Allington & Cunningham (1996) have written about time on task. In particular they point out the effect of disruptions on literacy learning and have called for a complete restructuring of the school day.

It is important for the reader to know that Ms. Philips volunteered to participate in this study. She was one of two teacher collaborators and one of 11 participants from Washington Elementary. I (Guice) chose to analyze instruction in her classroom for various reasons. First, and most importantly, although I was responsible for studying two schools in the study, I was more distressed by the learning climate in Washington Elementary, for both the teachers and the children. This led me to devote a lot of attention to this setting as I struggled to understand and change instruction in several classrooms, including Ms. Philips'. Instruction in the other teacher collaborator's classroom in this school has been reported on in a doctoral dissertation (see Michelson, 1995).

Ms. Philips gave us her time and energy and risked much by allowing us into her room and life for five years. I (Guice) came to know her over the course of the study, and she spoke quite frankly to me about her teaching and her personal life. I strove for collaboration, encouraged her to investigate questions about her teaching with me, and modeled many lessons so that she and others could "see" what response-based instruction looked like. Until the research team began analyzing our data to see what changes had occurred over the course of the study, we did not realize how little the children were engaged. In the following passages, we present our methodology and more specific findings concerning reading/language arts instruction in this third grade classroom.

Methodology

This study was part of a five-year investigation of patterns of implementation of literature-based instruction in schools that serve large numbers of poor children (as defined by the number of children receiving aid for free and reduced-priced lunches). Our primary goal was to understand the various factors influencing instruction in schools that serve large numbers of children from impoverished families. During the course of the study we focused our attention on four schools in four different districts in upstate New York: two rural schools, one suburban school, and an inner city school. All of these schools described their literacy curriculum as "literature-based." However, each school represented a different curricular configuration: basals, basals and books, books and basals, and books (see Allington & Guice, 1993).

In this paper, we focus on the nature of instruction in one third grade class at Washington Elementary, an inner city school serving nearly 900 children, 90% of whom receive free or reduced-priced lunch. African American students make up the vast majority of the student body. Teachers in this district use commercial anthologies (basals) as their primary source of reading materials.

Data Collection Procedures

During the course of the study, teachers participated on two levels. On the first level, years one and five, we interviewed and gathered classroom environmental data using CLIPs (Classroom Literacy Inventory Protocol; see Appendix for example), a high inference coding instrument. We interviewed 11 volunteer Washington Elementary teachers in order to get a

general sense of literacy instruction in the school and to determine if change occurred over the five-year period. We conducted brief teacher interviews and classroom observations to assess various factors concerning literacy instruction, such as type and quantity of books in the classroom library, planning for literature instruction, and evaluation of literary knowledge. We were also interested in how teachers procured trade books, perceived their own knowledge of and attitudes toward children's literature, and if and how they collaborated with colleagues. These data were entered into a HyperCard 2.2 stack to allow for a variety of storage and analysis possibilities.

In the second level of the study, four of the eleven teachers volunteered to serve as teacher collaborators during the five years of the project. For this level, we investigated various factors affecting literature-based instruction and teacher change. Teacher collaborators, like Ms. Philips, were involved in extensive formal and informal interviews, focus group meetings, classroom observations, and collaborative teaching units with the researchers (see Table 1 for some specific data sources concerning Ms. Philips).

Table 1

Selected Data Sources Concerning Ms. Philips

School Year	CLIP	Formal Interview	Informal Interview	Full Day Observation	Focus Group
91-92		1	3	3	2
92-93		2	7	2	11
93-94*		2	23	2	12
94-95		2	6	4	1
95-96		1	1	2	2

* Researcher (Guice) also modeled 10 writing workshop lessons this year.

In order to document and analyze instruction in this classroom and standardize observational procedures for the study, we observed children using a time X activity observation instrument, SOI (Student Observation Instrument; see Appendix for example), for at least two full days of instruction per year. Before embarking on the longitudinal study, research team members were trained to use the SOI during observations conducted in a pilot school, and established an inter-rater reliability of .89.

Students were selected for observation based on two criteria: one, they received free or reduced-priced lunch, and two, they had written parental consent. Over the five-year period, we observed children with a range of teacher-reported "abilities" who received various

support/special education services. We documented activity (e.g., reading/language arts, social studies...), location (e.g., regular classroom, other classroom...), level of text (e.g., letter/word, story/book...), student format (e.g., listen/lecture/recite, compose...), group (e.g., whole class, small group...), student choice (e.g., no choice, free choice), and interaction (e.g., regular teacher, peer...). SOI data were entered into a HyperCard 2.2 stack for analysis. During these observations, research team members also wrote field notes to further contextualize and lend rich description to our records of classroom instruction.

Data Analysis Procedures

This paper represents our belief that after five years of careful observation of the classrooms in this school, we understand what children experienced in those classrooms. Some of this understanding we've shared in papers we've written, presented, and published to explain what we were finding in these schools and classrooms. After reading four years of field notes, interview transcripts, and CLIPs data, as well as being a participant observer during focus group meetings, we determined that another way to share this understanding would be this paper on the nature of instruction during reading/language arts.

We concluded that the day and child depicted in the introduction epitomize the normal, predictable routines that characterized reading/language arts instruction in Ms. Philips' room and children's experiences in the library during the course of the study. Further, we selected a June day from year four because we believe that instructional procedures were well practiced at this time and generally reflect a regular day in her classroom. We chose to highlight a day from Tamara's perspective for two reasons: 1) Gender -- because girls are rarely represented in views of urban classrooms; and 2) Teacher-reported high ability level -- because high ability children are also under-represented in reports of instruction in urban classrooms.

In order to investigate the access to literate experiences in Ms. Phillips' classroom and in the library, we analyzed our observational data both quantitatively and qualitatively. We generated reports of SOI HyperCard 2.2 stacks using Reports for HyperCard 2.0 which calculated the total time of each student format (e.g., listen/lecture/recitation, silent reading, composing, being read to aloud, worksheet, transcribing) per year during reading/language arts. We rounded these averages to the nearest whole minute. Using Hypercard allowed us to group, arrange, and sort by variables such as student, school, and date of observation. Next, we calculated means for each student format for years one through four (year five included only CLIP data, no observational data). This gave us rough estimates of the time allotted for various aspects of

instruction in this classroom. We then created bar graphs which aided us in determining trends and changes in instruction (see Figure 1).

Next, we analyzed the field notes and interview transcripts qualitatively using two deductive analytic processes. Because codes for classroom observations were preset in our SOI, a standardized observational protocol (e.g., Goetz & LeCompte, 1984), our analysis task was to generate more descriptive definitions of the codes that represented Ms. Philips' version of instruction. For example, we discovered that "conference," one of the preset student format codes, varied qualitatively by teacher. In order to describe the nature of literacy instruction in Ms. Philips' class, we first analyzed the characteristics inherent to her instruction coded under our broadly defined categories.

Because this longitudinal study consisted of multiple methods, we will describe our qualitative analysis procedures without the benefit of a formally recognized analysis approach for our readers, for example constant comparison methods. We first read and summarized the field notes. Next, we determined the conditions, variations, and frequency under which each format occurred and noted this information on index cards. For example, when the code was "conference" in Ms. Philips' room, this primarily embodied the teacher checking the child's work and editing writing for spelling errors, but rarely did Ms. Philips discuss books or the content of children's writing during conference times. While "conference" might be thought of as writing content and discussion about books or writing, this was not the case in this teacher's room.

Interview transcripts were qualitatively analyzed for other reports throughout the course of the project (e.g., Guice, 1994; Guice & Johnston, 1994; Johnston, Guice, Baker, Malone, & Michelson, 1995). Thus, repeated analysis of these transcripts was not necessary for this paper. However, we reread transcripts and coded Ms. Philips' comments concerning instructional decisions for the purposes of this paper.

Findings

Ms. Philips' literacy instruction is based primarily on the stories and activities found in the literature anthology adopted by the district. She began the school day with silent reading at 8:45 and spent most of the morning involved in reading/language arts instruction, often until 12:00. This block of time included a daily half-hour special time (e.g., art, music, or physical education). At the beginning of this study, this urban district adopted a literature anthology and advertised this adoption as one of the various ways the district became "whole language." The district also decided to have teachers integrate spelling instruction into their language arts

programs. Thus, teachers were not given spelling books. However, Ms. Philips, contrary to the district mandate, based her spelling instruction on a "spelling packet," which consisted of spelling units photocopied from her daughter's third grade spelling book from another district. The district also encouraged teachers to teach writing through writing workshop. All teachers in the district received training in the ELIC (Early Literacy Inservice Course) approach.

We investigated changes in children's experiences based on time by activity data collected during classroom observations over four years. In figure 1 below we present the average time students spent on various formats (e.g., worksheets, silent reading, conference, etc...). While changes were apparent in some over the four years, they were not drastic with respect to the amout of time children engaged in various formats. There was an overall decrease in the average amount of time children spent listening to lectures and transcribing, which could be viewed as a postive change from a quantitative stance. There was also a decrease in the average amount of time spent engaged in silent reading and composing, two changes which are not positive when one considers the importance of student engagement. These rather slight variations in time are less important than the fact that the nature of activities during these formats remained unchanged throughout the course of the study. We present these static patterns of instruction in tables 2-12.

Because of the static nature of the instruction and student activities, we believe that a typical day in this classroom is best represented by the average amount of time on activities. Over the course of the study, we observed children in Ms. Philips' class, like Tamara, spend on average, half of their reading/language arts listening to the teacher and completing workbook pages. For the remaining 50 percent of the time they were engaged in various other reading activities. The children also spent some time each week composing during Ms. Philips' writing workshop. However, on the particular day we summarized from the field notes in the introduction of this paper, writing workshop did not take place. Figure 2 below represents the average amount of time on student formats over four years in Ms. Philips' classroom.

On average, the reading/language arts block was 3 1/4 hours. Figure 2 accounts for an average of 2 1/4 hours of this block. Half of the remaining hour consisted of a the 30 minute "special" time mentioned above. Transitions, waiting, and other disruptions that impeded children's engagement in language arts activities accounted for the other half hour. In Tables 2-12 we illustrate and discuss each student format from our time by activity data (taken from SOI) presented in figures 1 and 2.

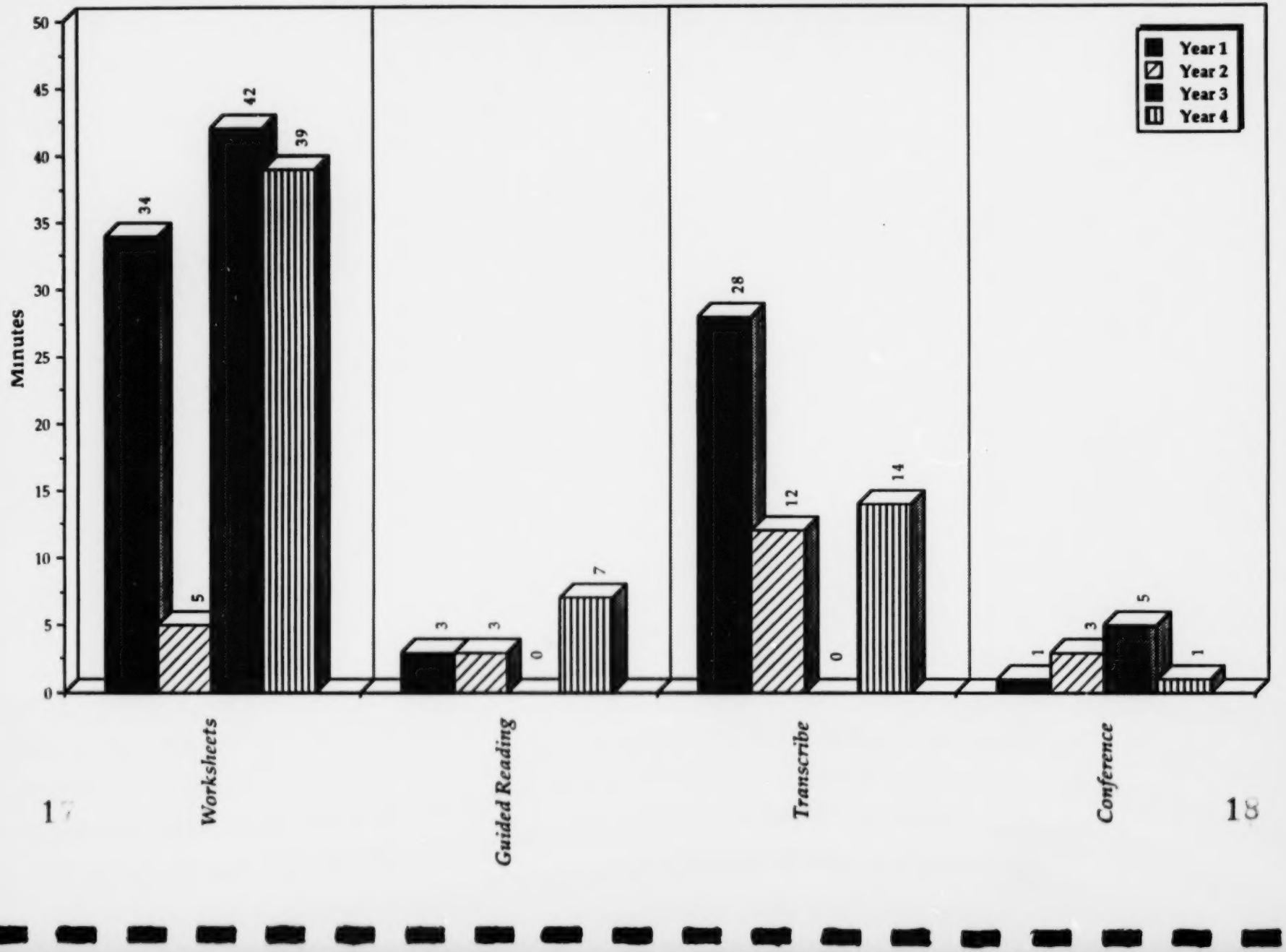
Tamara and her classmates spent an average 32 minutes per day listening to the teacher lecture about reading/language arts. Table 2 presents the type and frequency of the reading/language arts lectures we observed over four years.

Figure 1:

Average Time on Format (in minutes), Years 1-4

Figure 1 (con't)

Average Time on Format (in minutes), Years 1-4



Average Time on Format (in minutes), 1991-1995

Table 2

Listen/Lecture/Recitation

Type of Activity	Number of Times Observed
Giving directions	20
Summarizing story components	12
Making predictions (picture clues)	5
Word features (parts of speech, compounds)	5
Prereading (titles/vocabulary)	4
Introducing vocabulary/spelling words	3
Reading passages/asking questions	2
Comparing two texts (similar folktales)	2
Selecting writing topics	2
Classroom rules/procedures	2
Using context clues	1
Listening to story teller	1
Listening to book talk	1
Editing	1
Recitation of spelling words	1

Children primarily listened to Ms. Philips give directions for completing workbook pages and skill sheets and summarize stories from the anthology. They also listened to word level lessons such as parts of speech and compound words. They listened to definitions of vocabulary and spelling words taken from the spelling packet and the literature anthology. Language arts lessons also included exposure to reading strategies such as using picture and context clues to decode unfamiliar words. Children rarely heard Ms. Philips discuss books or aspects of writing, for instance, compare texts or give book talks.

Children spent almost as much time as they did listening, 30 minutes, involved in worksheet activities, as depicted in Table 3 below, which presents a summary of types of worksheet activity we observed.

Table 3

Worksheet

Nature of Activity	Number of Times Observed
Literature anthology workbook	12
Spelling packet (skills sheets)	4
Cloze passages	3
Language workshop packet (skill sheets)	3
Word search	1
Reading skills flash cards	1

Children worked independently during this time. Most of the worksheets that children were assigned were taken from the literature anthology and were related to the week's story. The second most frequent worksheet activity was the spelling packet copied from Ms. Philip's third grade daughter. The language packet work was similar in that it consisted of grammar exercises from a traditional English textbook. Cloze passage practice was also important in this classroom because it, in Ms. Philips' words, "prepared" students for the New York State PEP (Pupil Evaluation Program), a state-mandated, third grade standardized test in cloze passage form. We also observed children involved in games intended to reinforce skills, like flash cards and word searches. These activities were not related to any others covered in this class, but rather seemed isolated and intended to fill blocks of time.

Children did not have long blocks of time for silent reading at anytime of the day. In fact, silent reading period was observed at the beginning of the day as students arrived to start the school day and averaged 15 minutes per day across the years of the study. In table 4 we present the types of texts we observed children reading during this time.

Table 4

Silent Reading

Texts Read by Students	Number of Times Observed
Independent/self selected title	7
Literature anthology	5
Student published text	1

We observed children reading self-selected books during the morning silent reading block. Children who arrived early had a full fifteen minutes of time to read, while those who arrived later had less time to read. During this time children also organized materials for the school day and interacted with peers, which oftentimes erupted into physical altercations. However, we also observed brief periods of silent reading as Ms. Philips directed children to read specific sections of the literature anthology stories. On one occasion we observed a child reading a student published text; however, student-published texts were not available as part of the classroom library.

Children in Ms. Philips' classroom spent an average of 15 minutes per day transcribing, on average three minutes more per day than they did composing. In table 5 we present the types of transcribing activities.

Table 5

Transcribing

Nature of Activity	Number of Times Observed
Spelling words written 3 times	4
Vocabulary words with definitions	4
Copying another child's work	2
Board work	
Cloze passage	1
Identifying parts of speech	1
Questions to answer	1
Final copy	1

The majority of transcribing consisted of board work assignments, primarily spelling and vocabulary words. Definitions of these words were copied from textbooks. Children also copied one another's homework assignments and classmates' work, such as answers to workbook pages, this despite having received guidance from the teacher. On one occasion, we observed a child transcribing a final copy of a draft.

Table 6 presents a summary of composing activities in Ms. Philips' classroom. Children composed an average of 12 minutes daily, although they composed sentences more often than they did whole pieces of writing.

Table 6

Composing

Nature of Activity	Number of Times Observed
Writing sentences using spelling/vocab	4
Self selected story	2
Self selected poem	1
Journals	1

Spelling and vocabulary words served as an impetus for sentence writing. While children occasionally selected their own writing topics, this occurred less frequently and with shorter duration than did writing sentences using spelling and vocabulary words. Similarly, little time was spent writing in journals in this classroom.

Ms. Philips devoted an average of 11 minutes per day to drawing, painting, and other projects related to stories from the anthology, as presented in table 7.

Table 7

Drawing/Painting/Project

Nature of Activity	Number of Times Observed
Projects related to anthology selection	4
Publishing a book	3
Illustrating a story	1
Coloring a ditto	1

The majority of these activities were related to children's reading and writing in this classroom. Literature anthology activities, taken from the teacher's manual, consisted of photocopied shapes of story elements which students were required to cut out and decorate. Students also wrote and illustrated stories, both their own and summaries of anthology selections. On one occasion, we observed children coloring a holiday ditto.

Ms. Philips read aloud to her students an average of nine minutes per day. Table 8 lists the books we observed being read aloud.

Table 8

Teacher Reads Aloud

Books Read Aloud by Teacher
Another Aesop Fable
The Boy Who Cried Wolf
Dragon Stew
George Washington's Birthday
The Gold Tinted Dragon
Homer Price
Introduction *to Dragon Stew*
The Mixed Up Chameleon
The Shepherd and the Wolf
Tuck Everlasting
A Wind in the Door

Many of the stories Ms. Philips read aloud were selected from a collection of supplemental trade books included with the anthology. Three of the 11 selections read aloud were novel length, and the remaining were picture books or selections from the anthology. Although Ms. Philips read aloud daily to the children, she did not do so at a set time each day.

Children spent an average of three minutes per day engaged in conferences with Ms. Philips. Table 9 details these experiences.

Table 9

Conference

Nature of Activity	Number of Times Observed
Conference with Teacher	
Checks work	8
Guides writing (content and spelling)	1
Teaches skills (parts of speech)	1
Reads student's poem	1
Conference with peer	
Editing	1

Ms. Philips' conferences with students consisted primarily of her checking children's work for accuracy. She also edited their writing. There was no focus on story content, audience, or revision. Children rarely conferenced with peers about their writing. We observed a peer conference on one occasion.

As depicted in Table 10, children shared their thoughts or work an average of three minutes per day in Ms. Philips' classroom.

Table 10

Sharing

Nature of Activity	Number of Times Observed
Authors' circle	2
Pen pal letters	2
Workbook answers	2
Writing drafts	1

In this classroom, children shared final copies of their work, once it had been edited and corrected by Ms. Philips. Sharing was specific and formal. Children generally shared completed work as opposed to works-in-progress under these formal situations. Another form of sharing occurred when children copied each other's work.

We observed children in support/guided reading situations for an average of three minutes. However, this usually occurred several times during the language arts period, so that the class could finish the story. Table 11 outlines the various types of supported reading we observed.

Table 11

Supported/Guided Reading

Nature of Activity	Number of Times Observed
Oral cloze reading with QAE (question, answer, evaluate)	7
Round robin reading	4
Choral reading of spelling/vocabulary	3
Choral reading of poem	1

Since a majority of the literature anthology stories were too difficult for students to read independently, Ms. Philips needed to guide and support students' reading. Ms. Philips read the anthology and occasionally paused for students to orally read the end of sentences. During an interview, Ms. Philips stated that she used oral cloze procedures so that students would attend to the print. She also told us that she had students answer questions about the text during these lessons so that she could assess their comprehension and keep them focused. Children's reading was further guided through round robin reading of the anthology stories as well as choral reading.

Ms. Philips' students rarely read aloud, an average of two minutes per day, as shown in Table 12.

Table 12

Students Read Aloud

Type of Texts Read by Student	Number of Times Observed
Reading anthology with peer	2
Reading peer's draft	1

Because the reading centered around guided reading and silent reading of the anthology passages, little time was left for student read alouds. Peer editing and revising did not occur frequently in Ms. Philips' classroom. Most revision and editing of children's writing occurred in teacher conferences. Thus, we were not surprised to observe children reading aloud drafts on only one occasion.

The research overwhelmingly suggests that children learn to read by engaging in reading and learn to write by engaging in writing (Allington, 1983, 1994; Cunningham & Allington, 1995; Graves, 1983). Our data show that in Ms. Philips' classroom, children spend little time engaged in independent reading and writing. Rather, their time is spent listening to directions and completing worksheets. However, on those occasions when we did observe children reading

books of their choice and writing about topics that interested them, they were excited and engrossed with their tasks.

Conclusions and Implications

Our difficult task as researchers is to try to make sense of Tamara's, and indeed all children's, experiences in this classroom with respect to the instruction and opportunities they received. Children's literacy experiences in Ms. Philips' classroom were impacted by a number of factors, some due to Ms. Philips' constructs about teaching and learning, others due to factors within the broader educational context.

As participants and observers in her class, we established rapport with Ms. Philips and came to understand and like her as a person. However, we cannot ignore the effects of Ms. Philips' teaching and organizational practices, which certainly denied her students access to high frequency, high quality literacy experiences and presented a narrow and limiting image of reading and the language arts; nor can we ignore the influence and effects of the school and district as contexts.

Since we believe it is useful, imperative actually, to consider and understand a teacher's perspectives, as well as our interpretation of this study, in this section we blend Ms. Philips' comments about teaching and learning with the conclusions and implications we draw from our knowledge of her setting and relevant research.

Influences on Teaching and Learning in Ms. Philips' Classroom

Ms. Philips, like all teachers, has power to shape the instruction and learning environment. In fact, we believe that teachers have much more power than they think (Barr & Dreeben, 1983). Teachers, like all of us, are limited by what we perceive. If we hope to create classrooms and schools "that work" (Cunningham & Allington, 1995; Allington & Cunningham, 1996) we must consider Edmonds' words,

> We can, whenever, and wherever we chose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us. We already know more than we need to do that; whether we do it must finally depend on how we feel about the fact that we haven't so far. (1981, cited in Allington & Cunningham, 1996, p. 24)

Therefore, in the following passages, we try to make sense of her instructional approach by exploring the constructs which underpin Ms. Philips' notions about teaching, learning and work. We also believe Ms. Philips may not be aware of some factors influencing her instruction. Curricular and contextual influences on teaching and learning in this classroom will be presented in subsequent passages.

A focus on personal life. From information revealed in interviews, we discovered that Ms. Philips focused substantial time and energies on her own children and family. As a result, Ms. Philips very rarely spent time before and after school planning lessons or activities or engaged with other such work of teachers, including presenting a pleasant, inviting environment for learning. We are saddened to report that over the course of the study, five years, the displays and bulletin boards in her classroom remained unchanged.

This focus on her personal life may, in part, explain why her literacy instruction remained static from year to year and centered around the literature anthology. Little research on the relationship between teachers' lives inside and outside of school and their pedagogy has been conducted. The majority of research in this area concerns the ways in which teachers' lives enrich their teaching or how teachers maintain a balance in two worlds, home and professional (e.g., Lillard, 1980). The work of Cochran-Smith, Lytle and their colleagues (1992, 1996), for example, informs us about the complexity of the interactions and conflicts between teachers' personal and professional lives. Thus, we understand that teachers' personal lives do indeed influence their work in the classroom. Ms. Philips was no exception.

The last observational year of the study, 1995, was a difficult one for Ms. Philips. She described herself as "burned out" after having taught in the school for almost 10 years. When asked why she did not change careers or move to another district or school, Ms. Philips reported that this would require her to "work too hard." She elaborated by saying that she would be expected to stay after school and parents' expectations of her would be more demanding, something she wished to avoid.

This led us to explore the literature on teacher attitudes, burnout, and work ethics. Our review of the literature on teachers' work ethics and attitudes yielded little or no helpful information. The research literature on work ethics concerned the teaching of them to students and not on the teachers' own ethics. The literature on teacher "burnout" and the stress associated with teaching in urban schools may explain some of Ms. Philips' instructional practices and her attitudes about teaching and learning. In general, several factors lead to teacher burnout; those pertinent to Ms. Philips' situation are feelings of efficacy and working in a rigid context (Brissie, Hoover-Dempsey, & Bassler, 1988). Raschke, Dedrick, Stratat, and Hawkes

(1985) identified several factors contributing to elementary teachers' burnout. We believe that Ms. Philips felt powerless to make changes and our research suggests that she worked in a controlling district. Some more recent research suggests that the pressures associated with the reform movement contribute to feelings of teacher burnout (Lutz & Maddirala, 1990). There is evidence indicating that veteran teachers who are committed to reform feel supported by administrators concerning their instructional tasks (Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990). These two later concepts can help explain Ms. Philips' burnout. There was some pressure to make changes and little administrative knowledge of or support of instructional practices. For example, in the beginning years of our study, the elementary language arts coordinator would "pop in" to see if teachers were using the literature anthology "correctly." However, at the school level, only two of the district's 13 elementary principals had prior teaching or administrative experience with elementary age children prior to assuming their current positions. For instance, the principal at Washington Elementary was a high school coach before assuming his principalship.

Perceptions of children. We have some evidence indicating that Ms. Philips had low expectations for her students' learning. We know that children's experiences in schools reflect the expectations of the teachers and administrators who serve them (see Clark & Peterson, 1986; MacLeod, 1987). These lowered expectations and leveled aspirations were shared by other teachers in the school. For example, Michelson (1995) conducted a study of one first grade teachers' beliefs and practices and found low expectations for all the children in that school. Johnston, Guice, Baker, Michelson and Malone (1995) also found that teachers' constructs about children influenced their assessment of children's instructional needs. In particular, this study indicated that many teachers considered literacy learning to be linear and hierarchical and that children having difficulties learning to read needed a structured focus on skill development. Delpit (1995) would concur and, in fact, she seems to suggest that round robin reading may be an effective instructional technique for minority children at risk. We disagree. Tamara and her peers were most engaged in reading and writing when given choices and time to work.

Another significant factor that we believe influenced these children's literacy experiences was Ms. Philips' concepts about their learning. Ms. Philips generally thought that her children had difficulties learning, so she adjusted her expectations. She told us,

> Being this year, with so many lower kids in my room, I have kinda had to change the way I teach. I have lowered my expectations somewhat, unfortunately, because I'm geared more toward, I always have to remember that I have these kids that are reading, some of them on a first grade level. So I find myself, doing more on reading to them. (Interview, 6/23/93)

Ms. Philips spoke of making similar adjustments in every interview. Her views of children's learning were similar to her views of children's behavior. At the end of the study, we asked Ms. Philips to describe herself as a teacher to a student teacher. The following selected comments reveal her expectations for children.

> My feeling is you need to let them know who's boss, especially at my school...I don't want kids telling, thinking that they can do whatever they want...I expect them to behave, and to achieve a certain amount, and it's not the same for every students. And I think sometimes, that's the hardest thing for teachers to do, is to set limits as to, well this child can only be expected to do this, but that one should be doing this much more. (Interview, 6/95)

As Routman has informed us, "perhaps the most critical factor in developing a personal philosophy is the way the teacher views and treats children " (1988, p. 29). Routman explains that this is accomplished through a shared control and mutual respect between teachers and children. Tamara and her peers had little say in their learning experiences, however.

Teachers' lowered expectations have a profound effect on students' learning. Ms. Philips believed she had students with learning difficulties and who were troublesome to manage. Consequently, she neither expected these children to learn to read and write easily nor to engage in these activities without protest. In a seminal study, Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) indicated that teachers' expectations greatly influence educational outcome and children's learning. Further, from their comprehensive review of studies investigating the relationship between teachers' expectations and students' learning, Brophy and Good (1986) found that teachers' views of students influenced their interactions with them, as well as a number of other significant factors influencing students' learning. In literacy research, the effect of teachers' expectations on their interaction in reading groups has been documented by Allington (1983). This research, in part, may explain and help us understand that the instruction children received matched Ms. Philips' lowered expectations for their learning.

There is a large body of research on classroom management and effective instruction (for a review see Doyle, 1986). We understand that children need to remain engaged in activities in order to learn. If children are disruptive or interrupted by disruptions, then engaged reading and writing is less likely to occur. We know that when children are "on task" they are more likely to learn. We know that children need interesting tasks of appropriate complexity because they don't yet have the skills to maintain focused attention on uninteresting tasks. Wilson and Gambrell (1988) illustrated that placing students in appropriately difficult texts enhanced on-task behavior. Turner's more recent work indicates that children find open literacy tasks more

motivating (1995). With Ms. Philips' focus on basal activities, these children experienced texts that were far too difficult and activities that were far from open so that staying on task was challenging, at best. We also know that children aren't necessarily unmotivated, they just might not be motivated to do what the school or teacher wants them to do. Thus, Ms. Philips' lack of attention to these factors is significant.

Curricular Influences. We also believe that there are factors concerning the curriculum and Ms. Philips' interpretation of it that affect her students' literacy experiences. Ms. Philips' low expectations for her students, for instance, figures into the instruction she provides them. McCutcheon (1988) explores three levels of curriculum: overt, hidden, and null. The overt curriculum encompasses the planned and intended information which is expected to be taught by teachers. In this classroom, the overt curriculum is getting the children through the anthology. Information which is imparted to children unintentionally, such as teacher biases or beliefs about policies and subject matter, is the hidden curriculum. Behaving, completing work, and following Ms. Philips' directions make up the hidden curriculum in this classroom. The information and experiences which children are denied access to and do not have an opportunity to learn in school is the null curriculum. While we understand that the null curriculum is "virtually infinite," we believe that the loss of some experiences carries greater consequences than the loss of other opportunities. Unfortunately, it seems evident to us that the null curriculum in Ms. Philips' classroom may very well be meaningful interactions with texts and people that would engage them in literacy learning, like reading and talking about culturally relevant books, developing a sense of authority over their reading and writing, and participating in a community of learners.

Apple and Jungck (1990), Beyer and Apple (1988), and Shannon (1987, 1989) give us another perspective on the effects of curricular materials on teaching and learning. Shannon and Beyer and Apple have suggested that the presence of commercially produced materials "deskills" teachers and influence teachers' motivation and innovations within their classrooms. We feel strongly that these concepts apply to Ms. Philips and the learning environment which she provides her students. Although there were real pressures from district-level administrators to adhere to the literature anthology and to follow its sequence at the beginning of the study, in the later years this pressure was lessened, and from our perspective, administrators suggested more innovative uses of these materials. Despite this lessening of pressure and her demonstrated expertise, however, Ms. Philips continued to base her instruction solely on the anthology selections.

While Apple and others (Apple and Jungck, 1990; Beyer & Apple, 1988; Shannon, 1987,

1989) offer this explanation for the deskilling of teachers, we also recognize that literature anthologies do offer a range of cognitive and strategic lessons and accompanying support materials. However, merely eliminating the basal, as suggested by Apple and Shannon, may not enhance instruction in this classroom. Ms. Philips offered virtually none of the strategy lessons, writing activities, or literary lessons which she had to demonstrate in order to earn her masters degree and reading teacher certification from our institution. This classroom teacher is well trained, has much professional knowledge about literacy learning, but for reasons we are struggling to understand selected not to use this knowledge for the children she taught.

Ben-Peretz (1990) described the conflicts teachers have with curriculum and further illuminated issues concerning teachers' autonomy. She suggests that although teachers desire autonomy, they may not actually act autonomously; rather, they may remain tied to the texts and not give enough consideration to overt curriculum without questioning its effects on students' learning. Ben-Peretz further explains that this may be a result of teachers' concepts of the superiority of curriculum authors, their lack of training (though not in Ms. Philips' case), and their concepts about the authority of the published text. Teachers also doubt their own knowledge of subjects. We believe that Ms. Philips has not yet considered how she interacts with the curriculum. Perhaps as Shannon and Apple suggest, she is "deskilled" to such a degree that she has become desensitized with respect to the effect of her curriculum on the children's learning. We do not believe that she lacks feeling of authority. Ms. Philips' lack of authority does not seem to be the driving force behind her decisions, but rather, it seems that key factors influencing her curricular decisions are motivation and energy. Haberman (1991) formulated the idea of a "pedagogy of poverty" consisting of the following core urban teaching acts:

> giving information, asking questions, giving directions, making assignments, monitoring seatwork, reviewing assignments, giving tests, reviewing tests, assigning homework, reviewing homework, settling disputes, punishing noncompliance, marking paper, and giving grades. (p. 291)

While individually these teaching acts are sound educational practices, the problem arises when there is such a rigid, routinized adherence that these become the curriculum. All of these acts are teacher driven. The instruction in this third grade classroom certainly consists primarily of these activities. Perhaps Ms. Philips and her colleagues are making direct decisions based on their collective notions of what urban children need. These constructs are based on the idea that these children need to get through the anthology, complete the assignments, pass the tests, complete their assignments. "Learning" is routinized and is measured by getting through the

day. In fact, the routines themselves become the curriculum at the expense of other activities. Texts in the form of trade books and children's writing which, in our opinion, should be the center of literacy curriculum, become second or third to the routines of giving assignments and completing the packaged curriculum materials.

Perspectives on change. Ms. Philips believes that she has made several changes in her instruction. During each interview she described, in detail, the many changes she had made in her instruction. For example, Ms. Philips offered her thoughts on changes she made in her organizational structure and her use of the spelling and language packet. She spoke about this particular change for several years:

> I think you're always changing. You change with the caliber of the students you have. You change because new materials come out. You change because you read articles and you say I want to try this, and that's where the idea for the language workshop came from, from a book I read. It wasn't exactly the same as this, but I thought, "there's an idea that might [work]," then I think back to what I did when I first started teaching, it's so totally different. (Interview, 4/20/93)

We saw few, if any, changes in the four years we observed her teaching. Elmore (1996) and other researchers inform us that although there are many surface changes in classrooms and schools, but there are few of much substance. Cuban (1990) suggests that educational change really consists of the same ideas that are continually recycled. According to Fullan (1991, 1993) there are two reasons why educational reforms are failing. One, because changes that are really needed are difficult to construct and enact. And secondly, many reform strategies are focused on things that don't really make a difference. Change in Ms. Philips' classroom was a result of efforts initiated by the district, as opposed to self-initiated reforms (e.g., Scharer, 1992), and was illustrative of the instruction in this school. While district officials presented these modifications as grand in scale, our data reveal few changes.

Although teachers do have great power concerning many aspects of instruction, they do not make completely isolated decisions. Ms. Philips felt pressured by the administrative supervisors to use the literature anthology at the beginning of the study. Although this lessened somewhat as the study progressed, Ms. Philips still based her curriculum on the stories in the anthology. Real change occurs when there is change in both the teachers' knowledge and the institutional knowledge. Teachers can individually change if indeed they wish to. Hatch and Freeman (1988) believe that effective teaching and learning are more likely when teachers match

philosophy with practice. Their work in kindergarten programs indicates that teachers may in fact be teaching from programs that do not match their philosophy. Ms. Philips' philosophy seems to indicate that different kids need different instruction, as does Delpit (1995). But in Ms. Philips' classroom our observations show that all children receive the same instruction. This might suggest that she is either seeking to match her practice and her philosophy or that she does not believe a mismatch exists. Hargreaves (1989) believes that change occurs when teachers change as people, which can be life changing as well. Thus, real changes occur when teachers' thinking changes. We have little evidence that suggests changes in the way Ms. Philips thought about learning and teaching. Sikes and Troyna (1991) suggest that experienced teachers are particularly resistant to change, as do Fullan and Hargreaves (1992). If Ms. Philips were resistant to change, which surely our data indicate, it is interesting that she, like the schools and districts described earlier, believes that she makes changes.

The focus in much of the research and general public thinking has been a focus on teacher knowledge. More recent views have called for change in the structure of schools. Particularly, Allington and Walmsley (1995) suggest that change is more likely to occur when we can eliminate this notion of schools as an assembly line and promote schools that actively engage children (Brown, 1993) and that defy conventional notions of learning.

School and district context factors. The driving force in this school is management and discipline. When asked what she would do as an administrator to improve reading and writing she told us,

> I'd like more support as far as discipline from the administration. I have a real bad kid in my class now. Luckily he has given the principal as hard a time as he's given me; since that's happened, I've had some support with him. He's out for another five days. Because he mouthed off one time to the principal, and carried on, was in his office throwing a fit for 45 minutes. But that didn't happen until he did it with the principal. I was putting up with this from September. (Interview 4/20/93)

Ms. Philips did have some children who were unusually disruptive. In fact, during the fourth year of the study I (Guice) wrote the following observation in my field notes,

> The room was like a powder keg ready to blow. A child dropped a pencil. Fights happened about every half hour. Children participated in groups that took sides of the two or three fighting. There are several homeless children in the room that seem particularly ready to

"defend" themselves. I've observed this on two different occasions.

Ms. Philips explained the effects of these disruptions on her instructional decisions,

> I'm doing a lot more group reading and a lot less paired reading. Because the children that I have cannot do the paired reading...And you know, as many times as I try it, 15 minutes later, we are back in group because they're in the back of the room fighting with each other. (Interview, 6/95)

There is a general feeling of apathy and inability to solve or even address management problems among the teachers and administrators in this school and dis rict. Few solutions to disruptive behavior other than to suppress behavior are offered. The only procedures for "handling" disruptive student behavior are reprimand and suspension. There is no focus on constructive ways of expressing emotions such as conflict resolution training for students or teachers. In fact, district policy limits the number of days a child can be suspended from school. When teachers at Washington Elementary, who do have a share in the decisions, proposed an in house suspension room, this too was denied by the central administrators in this district. There is one social worker for the nearly 900 children in this school. This too seems to have very little effect on the behavior. Teachers and administrators blame the children, the families, the community, and each other for the social problems that exist at Washington Elementary. Teachers like Ms. Philips feel helpless and completely overwhelmed with the real problems that exist in this school.

Ms. Philips and other teachers in this school who participated in the study attributed their focus and reliance on the basal to lack of other reading materials (e.g., tradebooks, etc...), yet at the end of the study we counted nearly 600 titles of books in Ms. Philips' classroom alone. Her classroom library was greatly enhanced by participation in our study. Teacher collaborators received a large stipend for books at the end of each school year of the study. We also gave books to several teachers, including Ms. Philips. We also encouraged school administrators to purchase materials for the classrooms. Many of these titles were also purchased by the school district with the intent of improving children's test scores. Further, during the course of the study, we found several unopened boxes of books in the school library which had holdings that fell far below the minimum ALA standards (see Guice, Allington, Johnston, Baker, & Michelson, in press). Therefore, materials for reading were present in the school, making these teachers' reasons for the reliance on the basal unfounded.

Another explanation for the low expectations and the negative school experiences is the cultural mismatch between the school and community. The school and its curriculum are

established by members of the mainstream culture. When middle class people enter schools, they seem familiar. Also there is a mismatch between the teachers' background and the children's. Few of the teachers at Washington Elementary, Ms. Philips included, live in the community around the school. Few of the teachers participate in community events. Most of the teachers leave school when the students do; in fact, it is rare to find any cars in the school parking lot after 3:30. When conducting after school interviews, we were asked to leave by 4:00 so that the custodians could lock the building.

Nationally, there is a growing focus on school and community relations and the effects of family literacy and support on children's learning (Morrow, 1995). These studies indicate that children learn better when there is open and positive communication between home and school. As parents approach the locked doors to Washington Elementary, they are admonished with signs warning them not to enter and to wait for their child to be dismissed. Another group of signs points parents to specific areas where they are to wait for their child. Ironically, there are efforts to promote school and community relations; however, these signs on the doors remain and are counterproductive to these efforts.

Possible Solutions

It is possible that Ms. Philips feels so overwhelmed by factors which she has no control over that she feels powerless and helpless to exert control over those factors over which she does. She cannot change the fact that some of the children she teaches come from poor families, are angry and act out this anger on other children, see acts of violence in their neighborhoods, observe peers and family members engage in criminal activities, and are often victims of verbal, physical, and sexual abuse. She cannot change the fact that many of her children do not have access to books and writing materials in their homes, are not read to, are not encouraged to complete homework, and are provided few after-school educational activities, such as Little League, scouting, music, and dance lessons. Nor can she change the school policy which prohibits children from taking home textbooks and library books. Ms. Philips does, however, have the power to design her classroom environment and instruction to provide her students with quality literacy experiences. She can provide large blocks of time for silent reading and writing. She can choose read aloud selections that are culturally relevant and meaningful to students. These are rather simple changes which she can make, which are well within her capabilities. However, more complex changes such as the nature of the discourse among teachers and students is called for. Further, and perhaps more difficult, are the necessary changes in the school's climate and

expectations.

There are several newer bodies of work that suggest solutions to problems of teaching and learning in urban schools, schools that serve large numbers of children from impoverished families. Many of these works offer strategies to help teachers improve their teaching through various means. Although Delpit's work (1988, 1995) is widely cited as one calling for changes in the way we teach minority children, she is unclear about how to bring about those changes or the balance between direct instruction and student-centered learning. Brown (1993) suggests that schools become centers of thoughtfulness accomplished by raising expectations and demanding a challenging curriculum. Another remedy is to provide "culturally-relevant instruction" (e.g., Au, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Strickland, 1994). Knapp and Associates (1995) found that children of high poverty benefited greatly from meaning-based instruction, building upon similar findings reported previously by others (e.g., Morrow, 1992). Such programs include careful consideration of the self of teachers and the self of students, of the structure of classroom social interaction, and the teachers' conception of knowledge. Ladson-Billings (1995) reports that there are schools where African American children are instructed in ways that connect instruction to children's cultures and homes. She also notes that there is a gap in the research literature reporting the stories of African American children. Here we offer one.

Cochran-Smith (1995) suggests that we promote educational change as we introduce teachers to the field. Specifically, she recommends that the following perspectives be developed in student teachers: reconsidering personal knowledge and experience, locating teaching within the culture of the school and community, analyzing children's learning opportunities, understanding children's understandings, and constructing reconstructionist pedagogy (p. 500). Our real challenge is to convince veteran teachers to do this.

If indeed Washington Elementary is one of those forgotten schools and neighborhoods mentioned by Kozol (1991, 1995), then we must locate these forgotten places and make sure teachers, parents, administrators, and community leaders take responsibility for how children are educated. In this district there is a complex hierarchy of leadership which seems more like a complex hierarchy of buck passing so that no one takes responsibility for the education of the children in this school. The principal says his hands are tied with respect to hiring and curriculum. This implies that principals aren't responsible. Parents are either unaware of the possible world of school that their children may be missing or they are unaware about how to act in ways that bring about real change. There are few community leaders that involve themselves in educational issues in this school. Most business owners contact the school to inform them of acts of theft by students in the school. Teachers also have a range of reasons why they can't be held responsible. While there are real pressures that teachers face, and the intense problems of

teaching in the inner city are indeed overwhelming, teachers too must rethink their power in shaping the educational experiences of inner city children.

We have shown you our view of Ms. Philips' instruction and a bit of her own perspective about her teaching situation. What we haven't shown you is the perspective of the principal and parents. Despite what researchers as outsiders may see, Ms. Philips is indeed viewed by colleagues and her principal as one of the, if not the, best teachers in the school. Her children consistently score high on New York State PEP tests and disrupt infrequently in comparison to other classrooms. Parents request her to be their child's teacher because she does provide children a safe place in the real physical sense. Although it is true that children in her classroom were on task, our concern is with the type of activities in which children engaged. Perhaps this positive view of Ms. Philips results from the general lowered expectations of the district and school. There are far too many classrooms in this school where children are engaged in few learning activities.

Further, from my (first author) perspective, this part of the study represents five years of failure. However, we believe that Ms. Philips would see things differently. As Roemer (1991) found, teachers and university-based researchers have different perspectives on the same situation. Ms. Philips believed that I helped her better understand writing and teaching in an urban district. Our challenge as educators is to find ways to help schools, parents, and community leaders formulate their own reform questions and rethink schools, schooling, and what learning entails. Classrooms that resemble those of our own childhoods just aren't doing the job. Thus, with all these wonderful reform ideas, the task remains to effect those who profess to not need or want change. While we wish we could provide a list of suggestions, we believe that we must help stakeholders -- parents, children, teachers, administrators, and community leaders -- engage in critical reflection and long-range planning with respect to school reform. We have far too many forgotten schools like Washington Elementary, and we simply cannot continue to allow the problems they face to go unnoticed and unaddressed.

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Appendices

Appendix A
Typical Library Worksheets

Appendix B
Classroom Literacy Inventory Protocol (CLIP)

Appendix C
Student Observation Instrument (SOI)

Name _____ Skill: Using a Table of Contents

All About Reptiles

Read the Table of Contents and the questions.
Write the page number that shows where you would look to find the answer to each question.

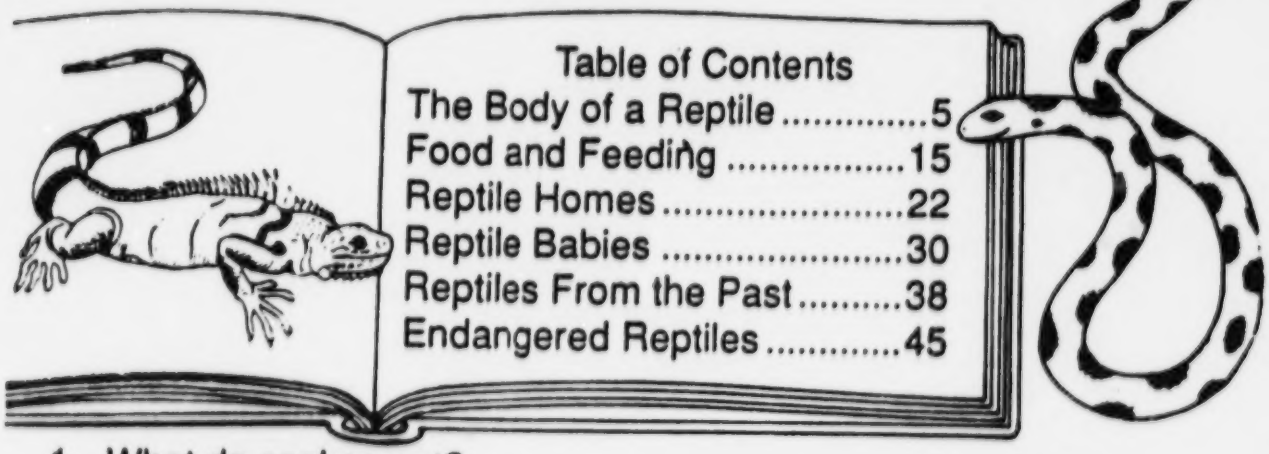

Table of Contents

The Body of a Reptile 5
Food and Feeding 15
Reptile Homes 22
Reptile Babies 30
Reptiles From the Past 38
Endangered Reptiles 45

1. What do snakes eat? ..... page _____
2. Do crocodiles breathe with lungs or gills? ..... page _____
3. Where do alligators live? ..... page _____
4. Are dinosaurs the ancestors of reptiles? ..... page _____
5. Do most reptiles have good eyesight? ..... page _____
6. Which reptiles are born alive? ..... page _____
7. What do sea turtles eat? ..... page _____
8. What kind of skin do reptiles have? ..... page _____
9. What endangers some reptiles? ..... page _____
10. Which reptiles live in water? ..... page _____

Brainwork! Work with a partner and find the answers to two of the questions. Use an encyclopedia or library book.

Answers: 1) 15 2) 5 3) 22 4) 38 5) 5 6) 30 7) 15 8) 5 9) 45 10) 22 Brainwork! 1) Snakes are meat-eaters. 2) Reptiles breathe with lungs. 3) United States and China 4) yes 5) yes 6) a few kinds of snakes and lizards 7) plants, fish, jellyfish, and shellfish 8) scales 9) hunting, egg collecting, and habitat destruction 10) marine iguanas, sea turtles, sea snakes, etc.

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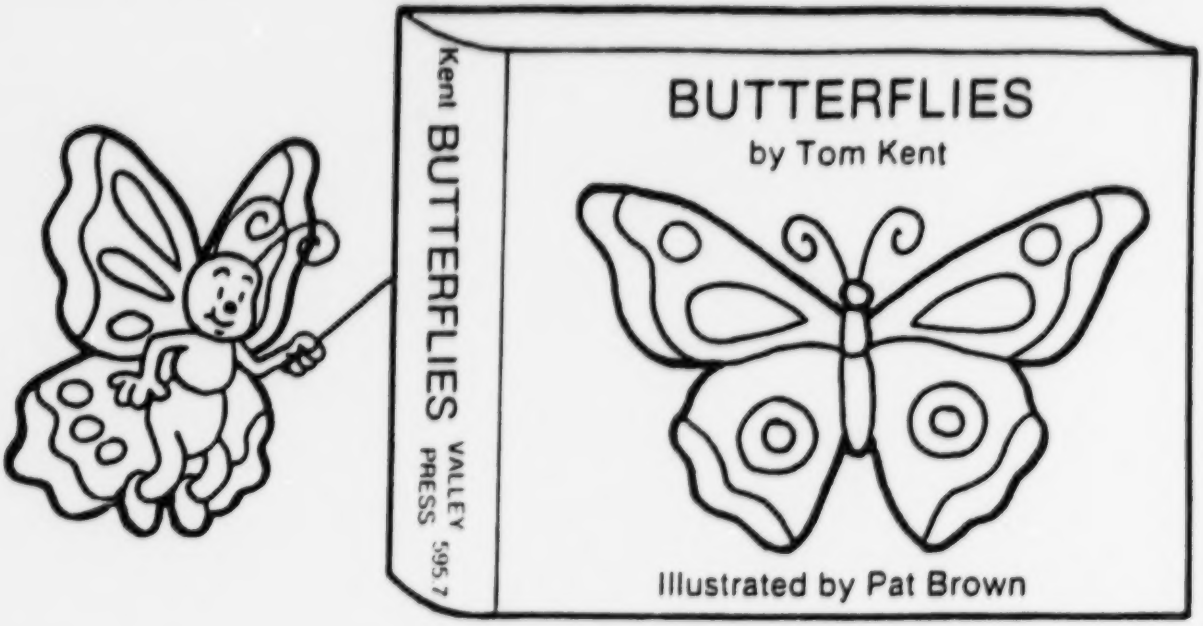
Can You Judge This Book by Its Cover?



1. What is the book's title? _____
2. Who is the author? _____
3. Who is the illustrator? _____
4. What is the publisher's name? _____
5. What number is on the spine of the book? _____
6. Is this book fiction or non-fiction? _____
7. What information on the book's cover is not on the spine?

_____

Brainwork! Some books have book jackets. List the kinds of information you can find on a book jacket that you usually can't find on a book cover.

Answers: 1. Butterflies 2. Tom Kent 3. Pat Brown 4. Valley Press 5. 595.7 6. non-fiction 7. Illustrated by Pat Brown

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MULTI-LEVEL STUDY
Classroom Teacher

☐ Interview
☐ Observation

Teacher _____
School _____
Interviewer _____
Date _____

1. What do you see as the role of the librarian?

- ☐ Bibliographer (just finds books for Ts & Ss)
- ☐ Runs independent literature program
- ☐ Offers library skills lessons
- ☐ Collaborates with Ts planning literature program
- ☐ Checks out and shelves books
- ☐ Helps Ss select books
- ☐ Helps Ts select books
- ☐ Media/Computers
- ☐ Other (explain)

2. Student access to the school library is:

- ☐ Primarily through scheduled periods
- ☐ Balance of scheduled and open periods
- ☐ Open access (with scheduled periods)
- ☐ If scheduled, weekly time allocation
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

3. Students use the library for:

- ☐ Book exchange
- ☐ Book sharing
- ☐ Research and study
- ☐ Learn access skills
- ☐ Media
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

4. Numbers of book titles:

- ☐ Less than 25
- ☐ 25-50
- ☐ 50-100
- ☐ 100-200
- ☐ more than 200

5. Number of titles with 5 or more copies:

- ☐ less than 5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ 11-25
- ☐ more than 25

Diversity of books:

6. Levels of Difficulty:

- ☐ Little/no variation
- ☐ Some variation
- ☐ Wide variation

7. Genre Balance:

- ☐ Little/no variation
- ☐ Some variation
- ☐ Wide variation

Entered in Database ☐

MULTI-LEVEL STUDY

Teacher _____

Page 2

8. Visibility/Display of literature:

- ☐ No attempt to display
- ☐ Some attempt to display
- ☐ Serious attempt to display

9. Major sources of books for the classroom program?

- ☐ Classroom Library
- ☐ School Library
- ☐ Public Library
- ☐ Student Collections (e.g., book clubs)
- ☐ Teacher Collections (private purchase)
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

10. At home, children are expected to:

- ☐ Read assigned literature
- ☐ Read independently selected literature
- ☐ Complete projects for literature
- ☐ Do research for themes/projects
- ☐ Complete vocab/comp worksheets
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

11. The classroom environment is:

- ☐ Virtually barren, no print display except boardwork
- ☐ Few examples of written language, some Ss' work
- ☐ Modestly rich, Ss' work displayed
- ☐ Rich, Ss' work organized & displayed, variety

12. Weekly planning for literature lessons is:

- ☐ Primarily individual effort by T
- ☐ Primarily by T with some consultation w/other Ts
- ☐ Collaboratively with other colleagues
- ☐ Collaboratively with colleagues and students

13. Which colleagues regularly collaborate in planning?

- ☐ Other same grade level Ts
- ☐ Other cross grade level Ts
- ☐ Reading T
- ☐ Special Education T (RRoom, Consulting T)
- ☐ Librarian
- ☐ Principal
- ☐ Supervisor
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

14. Planning is based primarily on:

- ☐ Commercial basal text sequence
- ☐ District curriculum guide
- ☐ Personally developed plan
- ☐ Individual student interests
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

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MULTI-LEVEL STUDY

Teacher _____

Page 3

15. What is the role of literature in the literacy program?

- ☐ To practice reading skills
- ☐ To teach reading skills
- ☐ To teach writing skills
- ☐ To teach literary skills not in basal
- ☐ To develop content knowledge
- ☐ To add enjoyment
- ☐ To establish lifelong personal reading
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

16. What kinds of materials are normally used during literacy instruction?

- ☐ Commercial basal anthologies
- ☐ Published workbook/sheets
- ☐ Teacher-made worksheets (get examples)
- ☐ Trade Books
- ☐ Texts created by children (LEA, Compositions)
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

17. Which of the following activities appear as regular features of the literature program?

- ☐ Teacher read-alouds of literature
- ☐ Teacher guided/shared reading of literature
- ☐ Student independent reading
- ☐ Shared reading
- ☐ Response journals
- ☐ Vocabulary/comprehension worksheets
- ☐ Response groups/dramatics
- ☐ Sharing (author chair, group share)
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

18. Student choice of literature for guided reading in the classroom program?

- ☐ Never/rarely
- ☐ Occasionally, half the time or so
- ☐ Most of the time

19. Student choice of literature for independent reading in the classroom program?

- ☐ Never/rarely
- ☐ Occasionally, half the time or so
- ☐ Most of the time

20. Literature is linked to writing and composition:

- ☐ Few, if any, links
- ☐ Some linkage, but loosely coupled
- ☐ Clear, close, consistent linkage

21. How is literature differentiated for groups of children?

- ☐ Not differentiated
- ☐ Grouped by ability, different literature & tasks
- ☐ Grouped by interest, different literature & tasks
- ☐ Individual needs/achievement
- ☐ Cooperative learning groups
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

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22. Remedial and special education instruction:

- ☐ Uses same literature
- ☐ Uses different literature
- ☐ Uses skills materials
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

23. Techniques for evaluating literature learning:

week	month	year	
☐	☐	☐	Worksheet
☐	☐	☐	Conference
☐	☐	☐	Sharing
☐	☐	☐	Projects
☐	☐	☐	Book Report
☐	☐	☐	Quiz/test
☐	☐	☐	Response journals
☐	☐	☐	Other (explain) _____

24. How do teachers keep track of students' literary development?

District	Personal	
☐	☐	Checklist
☐	☐	Bibliography
☐	☐	Student diary/log/journal
☐	☐	No system
☐	☐	Other (explain) _____

25. How does progress in literature get reported to parents?

- ☐ Conference
- ☐ Report card grade/rating
- ☐ Report card written comment
- ☐ Portfolio
- ☐ Checklist
- ☐ Essay/written summary
- ☐ Bibliography
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

26. Teacher expertise with children's literature is:

- ☐ Restricted/limited
- ☐ Workable knowledge
- ☐ Extensive

27. Teacher attitude toward use of literature is:

- ☐ Resistant
- ☐ Doubtful but trying
- ☐ Supportive
- ☐ Enthusiastic

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MULTI-LEVEL STUDY

Teacher _____

Page 5

Items 28-33: Observation Classrooms Only

28. During literature block, Ss were generally:
- ☐ Working alone
- ☐ Interacting in pairs or with Ss close by
- ☐ Interacting in groups
- ☐ Interacting in groups & working alone
- ☐ Flexible interaction patterns
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

29. Engagement during literature block:
- ☐ Frequent disruption, many Ss not engaged
- ☐ Frequent tuning out and lack of engagement
- ☐ Occasional disruptions, some Ss off-task
- ☐ Most Ss engaged most of the time

30. General nature of questioning/discussion of literature was:

Better	Poorer	
☐	☐	T asks 'fact' Qs, responses 'right/wrong'
☐	☐	T allows individual interpretations, controls val.
☐	☐	T allows individual ints, encourages reflection

31. Genre of book in literature block used by Ss during observation?
- ☐ Heavily narrative
- ☐ Balance of narrative & informational
- ☐ Heavily informational

32. Literature is integrated into:
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Social Studies
- ☐ Math
- ☐ Writing
- ☐ Other (explain) _____

33. Seating arrangements for literacy and literature lessons:
- ☐ Static, in rows or at tables
- ☐ T reorganizes seating, but infrequently
- ☐ Flexible, Ss and T reorganize almost daily

Additional Notes:

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Appendix C: Student Observation Instrument (SOI)

Time	Activity	Location	Student Format	Group	S Choice	Interaction
	1-transition 2-rdg/LA 3-math 4-science 5-soc studies 6-art* 7-library 8-gym* 9-music* 10-show&tell 11-homeroom 12- bathroom 13- Other _____	1-reg. classrm 2-other classrm 3-lunchrm 4-gym-outside 5-library 6-hallway 7- other_____ _____ Level of text 1.Letter/word 2. sentence/para 3. story/book 4. Other_____ _____	1 - Listen lecture/recitation 2 - Read aloud 3 - Being read aloud to by T 4 - Supported/guided reading 5 - Transcribing 6 - Composing 7 - Silent reading 8 - Drawing/Painting/Project 9- Sharing/demonstrating 10- Testing 11- Waiting 12- Worksheet 13- Conference 14-Other _____	1-Whole class 2-Small group 3-Pair 4-Individual Size _____ Number _____	1-No choice 2-Limited choice 3-Free choice	1-RegTeacher 2-Aide 3-Parent 4-Peer 5-No one 6-Computer 7-TV/Video 8-Tape rcrdr 9-Other Tchr 10- Other_____

Material: Attached:

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